

<i>Policy Category</i> Administrative	<i>Name of Policy</i> Use of Municipal Resources during the Election Campaign Period
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Policy Owner	Regional Clerk
Approval Body	Council
Approval Date	April 4, 2018
Effective Date	April 4, 2018
Review by Date	April 2022

1. Policy

This policy has been developed to ensure compliance with Section 88.18 of the Municipal Elections Act, where before May 1 in the year of a regular election, municipalities shall establish rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal resources during the election campaign period.

Nothing in this policy shall preclude a Member of Council from performing their duty as it related to sitting on Regional Council, nor inhibits them from representing the interests of their constituents.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to provide direction to regional staff, registered third parties, candidates and members of the public regarding the use of regional facilities and resources for campaigning and campaign related activities.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all regional staff, registered third parties, candidates and members of the public within the Region of Niagara.

3.1. Roles and Responsibilities

The primary responsibility in administering and reviewing this policy is the Regional Clerk. Although the primary responsibility of administering this policy resides with the Regional Clerk, she/he may delegate responsibilities to other Deputy Clerks and/or election officials.

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4. References and Related Documents.

4.1. Legislation, By-Laws and/or Directives

Bill 181 - Municipal Elections Modernization Act

Municipal Elections Act

Municipal Act

4.2. Procedures

4.2.1 Definitions

“Act” means the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, and includes any regulation made there-under.

“Campaigning” means a municipal election-related activity for the purpose of supporting or opposing the election of a Candidate or a question on the ballot.

“Campaign-related materials” means those materials that promote or oppose the candidacy of a person for elected office.

“Candidate” means a person who is running for office in a municipal election, nominated under Section 33 of the Act.

“Employees” includes full-time, part-time, and contract employees, paid by the Regional Municipality of Niagara.

“Registered Third Party” means an individual, corporation or trade union that is registered with a local municipality under s. 88.6 of the Act.

4.2.2 Use of Regional Facilities

No person (including staff, candidate or registered third party) may use Regional facilities for election campaigning purposes or for any campaign-related activities. Campaign signs and materials that identify a candidate may not be displayed in/at any Regional facilities (owned or leased). Election campaign material means those materials that promote or oppose the candidacy of a person for elected office, or that support or oppose a question on a ballot.

4.2.3 Regional Events

No person (including staff, candidate or registered third party) may campaign or distribute election campaign materials at any event/function being hosted by the Region, whether on Regional property or not.

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4.2.4 Regional Infrastructure, Equipment and Supplies

No person (including staff, candidate or registered third party) may use any Regional infrastructure, equipment or supplies for election campaign purposes or for any campaign-related activities. This includes any physical or technology systems that support the operation of the Region’s programs and services including but not limited to computer and telephone networks and applications, photocopiers, fax machines, email system, voicemail, wireless equipment, internet, intranet, smart phones, tablets and Regional provided electronic devices.

4.2.5 Regional Staff

Regional employees may participate in election-related activities provided that:

- 4.2.5.1 Any political involvement does not interfere with the Employee’s ability to perform his or her corporate duties objectively.
- 4.2.5.2 Employees do not engage in any political activity during working hours, or use the Region’s assets, resources, services or property.
- 4.2.5.3 Employees do not identify themselves as Regional Employees when engaged in political activity (for example, employees shall not wear clothing with the Region’s logo while canvassing for a candidate).
- 4.2.5.4 Employees do not use their official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election, nor use their official title while participating in otherwise permissible political activities.

4.2.6 Printing and Distribution

No person (including staff, candidate or registered third party) may print or distribute election campaign materials using Regional funds.

4.2.7 Websites and Social Media

Web sites, domain names and social media sites that are funded, owned, or operated by Niagara Region shall not include any election-related campaign material other than non-partisan election information material that is required for the proper administration of the election under the Act, and subject to the approval of the Regional Clerk.

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4.2.8 Communications Material

The Region’s communication materials, whether for internal or public distribution, shall not, unless otherwise sanctioned by the Regional Clerk:

4.2.8.1 Profile (name or photograph), make reference to and/or identify any individual as a candidate.

4.2.8.2 Advocate for or against a particular candidate.

(Communication materials include but are not limited to: news releases, media advisories, invitations for special events, flyers, posters, banners, brochures, newsletters, e-newsletters and social media accounts.)

4.2.9 Photographs and Videos

Photographs and videos produced for and owned by the Regional Municipality of Niagara cannot be used for election campaign purposes.

4.2.10 Corporate Identifiers and Logos

The Region’s corporate identifiers (such as the Niagara Region logo, coat-of-arms, and its slogans) may not be printed or distributed in election campaign material or included on an election campaign website. Links to the Region’s website are permitted from a candidate’s or third party’s election website for the purpose of obtaining information about the municipal election or sharing Regional program/service information.

4.2.11 Contact information

The Region’s email addresses, telephone numbers and facility addresses are not to be used by a candidate or registered third party as his/her their election campaign contact information.

5. Related Policies

None

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6. Document Control

The electronic version of this document is recognized as the only valid version.

Approval History

Approver(s)	Approved Date	Effective Date
Council	April 12, 2018	April 13, 2018

Revision History

Revision No.	Date	Summary of Change(s)	Changed by